

March 11, 2025

The Honorable Stephen M. Casey, Chair
House Municipal Government and Housing
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: BILL NUMBER H-5796 – RELATING TO TOWNS AND CITIES -- ZONING ORDINANCES

Dear Chair Casey and Honorable Committee Members,

On behalf of the Rhode Island League of Cities and Towns, I write to express our support for House Bill 2025-H 5796, which seeks to encourage higher density development in areas within the urban services boundary. This legislation is an important step in ensuring that municipalities have the flexibility to allow for diverse residential development in areas where public water and sewer infrastructure is available.

The League recognizes the importance of strategic growth and housing development that aligns with local infrastructure capacity and planning efforts. By requiring that zoning ordinances permit residential uses beyond solely single-family units in these designated areas, this bill fosters a more inclusive housing approach while promoting smart growth principles.

Additionally, we want to be cognizant of those cities and towns that already have zoning that reflects provision of sewer and water amenities and provide zoning incentives. Recognizing and supporting these municipalities through appropriate incentives will ensure that communities that have proactively planned for infrastructure-based development are acknowledged and encouraged to continue best practices in responsible growth management.

We acknowledge that municipalities have unique needs, and we are actively reviewing this bill in collaboration with our members to ensure that the proposed language effectively supports our cities and towns. As we continue this process, we look forward to working with the bill's sponsor to discuss potential amendments that may provide additional clarity and strengthen the legislation's impact.

The League remains committed to policies that balance the need for responsible development with municipal autonomy and sound planning practices. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input and collaborate with the sponsor on this important initiative.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to continued discussions on this legislation with the sponsor.
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "R. R. Rossi".

Randy R. Rossi
Executive Director

Cc: Honorable Members of House Municipal Government and Housing